



Choice Neighborhoods

e-news about transforming housing, people and neighborhoods

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Choice Neighborhoods FY2018 Planning Grant Applications Due June 12

HUD recently posted the [FY18 Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grants NOFA](#). With this publication, HUD is making available up to \$5,000,000 for Planning Grants, including Planning and Action Grants. Planning Grants are two-year grants that assist communities with severely distressed public or HUD-assisted housing in developing a successful neighborhood transformation plan and building the support necessary for that plan to be successfully implemented. Planning and Action Grants are three and a half year planning grants that pair planning with action. In addition to developing a neighborhood transformation plan, these grants enable communities to carry out Action Activities. Applications are due on Tuesday, June 12, 2018. The NOFA and application package must be downloaded from the www.grants.gov site. Potential applicants may submit questions to ChoiceNeighborhoods@hud.gov.

Choice Neighborhoods Appropriations

The recent FY18 appropriations, enacted on March 23rd, allocates \$150 million to the Choice Neighborhoods program. The appropriation also stipulates that Notice of Funding Availability for Choice Neighborhoods funds should be issued no later than 60 days after the enactment of the appropriations legislation.

FY2017 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant Finalists Identified

HUD has [announced](#) six applicants as finalists to compete for FY2017 Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants to transform public and/or other HUD-assisted housing, as well as the surrounding neighborhood. The finalists include applicants from the cities of: Flint, MI; Phoenix, AZ; Shreveport, LA; Baltimore, MD; Tulsa, OK; and Newport News, VA. The entities, selected from a pool of 20 applicants, will compete for individual grants of up to \$30 million. HUD anticipates announcing awards no later than July 2018.

Upcoming Choice Neighborhoods Position

The HUD Choice Neighborhoods Office will be seeking a qualified candidate to join our team. Candidates should have experience in either large scale neighborhood revitalization, affordable housing development and/or supportive services. The eventual hire will be expected to conduct grant management and other activities in support of the program. The position will be listed as "Neighborhood and Community Investment Specialist" and is anticipated to be posted in Spring on <https://www.usajobs.gov/>. Please feel free to share this announcement with potential candidates.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Funding for Community Economic Development and Job Creation

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is seeking applications for innovative projects to enhance job creation and business development for low income individuals. Community Economic Development grants will be made as part of a broader strategy to address objectives such as decreasing dependency on federal programs, chronic unemployment, and community deterioration in urban and rural areas. Only CDCs are eligible to apply. ACF expects to award 22 grants of up to \$800,000. [Applications](#) are due June 15, 2018.

EVENTS AND TOOLS

Webinar on Creating Walkable Communities for All Ages

America Walks is hosting a [webinar](#) titled, "From 8 to 80: Creating Livable Communities for All Ages," on Wednesday, May 9 at 2:00 pm EST. The webinar will share how communities of all shapes and sizes are making sure they are livable for people of all ages and abilities.

Health Strategic Partnership Planning Worksheet

The CLPHA Health Strategic Planning Workshop produced a [worksheet](#) to help participants assess their agency's current resident/community health efforts, identify strategic goals for the agency and their partners, and outline initial actions they could take to achieve these goals within 1-2 years. [Materials](#) from the workshop are also available.

Recorded Webinar on the Connection between Zip Code and Health

The Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions has released a video of their [online discussion](#) about the book "Twenty Years of Life." The webinar explores how where you live strongly predicts your health outcomes and how distressed communities can tackle these stark disparities.

Recorded Webinar on FY2018 Funding for STEM Education Partnerships

The U.S. Department of Education posted a [recording](#) of their recent webinar which focuses on expanding access to STEM and Computer Science Education.

HUD Strong Families Initiative

HUD's Father's Day Initiative is now the HUD Strong Families Initiative. The initiative encourages PHAs to host Mother's Day and Father's Day activities that empower and support families. Read the HUD Strong Families [bulletin](#) and visit the updated [website](#) to find marketing resources, relevant research, and examples from other communities.

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

CLPHA Report on Building Housing Authority and Education Partnerships

The CLPHA Housing Is Initiative has released a report titled [Elements of Success](#) to help housing authorities establish successful partnerships with schools to improve educational outcomes for resident children. The report includes text and video and covers topics such as how to form and sustain a partnership, challenges and solutions, and funding ideas.

Two Generation Strategies in Public Housing to Improve Life Outcomes

A CLPHA [report](#) features communities in San Antonio, Texas and Durham, North Carolina to examine the key components of two-generation initiatives: social capital; early childhood

education; post-secondary education and workforce development; economic assets; and health and well-being. The goals are to achieve progress in financial stability, children's developmental milestones, and families' ability to support and engage in their child's development.

GRANTEES IN THE NEWS

Cleveland's New Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant

An [article in FreshWaterCleveland](#) highlights the Buckeye-Woodhill neighborhood, which recently received a \$350,000 Choice Neighborhood Planning Grant. The article provides some background on the neighborhood, the public housing that will be redeveloped, and the collaborative efforts of the PHA and the City of Cleveland.

Plans for Huntington, WV's Recent Choice Neighborhood

[This article](#) features recent Planning Grant awardee Huntington, WV and highlights plans for the Fairfield Choice Neighborhood. Prior to the grant, Huntington was named America's Best Community and received \$3 million in recognition of the City's plan to revitalize three neighborhoods, including Fairfield.

SPOTLIGHT: Using the Arts in Seattle to Enhance the Neighborhood, Honor History, and Strengthen Community

The Seattle Housing Authority (SHA) has undertaken an ambitious portfolio of arts placemaking and programming to enhance the Yesler Choice Neighborhood. Using their leverage commitment from the Kresge Foundation, SHA has commissioned public art works, hired artists to engage residents in community programs, and established a summer youth media program and multi-tiered sewing program. SHA is also planning a mural project for this summer and has partnered with the Rave Foundation to offer an after-school arts program that will create soccer goal posts for a new park. These arts initiatives have visibly improved the new-mixed income neighborhood, honored the neighborhood's history and culture in a time of neighborhood transition, strengthened community ties, and provided enriching programming for all ages.

Starting in 2011, SHA received a Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grant for the redevelopment of Yesler Terrace and the surrounding neighborhood. Through Choice Neighborhoods, SHA is transforming 561 public housing units into a mixed income community of 2,500 housing units. The new mixed-income community offers safe, healthy and sustainable affordable housing, new parks and open spaces, increased transportation options and enhanced economic opportunities.

Through their leverage from the Kresge Foundation and work with partners, the arts have become a critical piece of the Choice Neighborhoods initiative. The Yesler neighborhood hosts an extremely diverse and culturally rich population. The arts programming SHA has established appeals to a diversity of ages, income ranges, and ethnic backgrounds. In a community where 16 languages are spoken, the arts have become a way to overcome differences and strengthen community ties. For example, Artists Rachel Kessler and Bo Young Choi lead weekly art workshops, focusing on easy art making like painting, drawing and crochet in one of the new building's lobby to create important socializing opportunities for target housing residents and other Yesler neighborhood residents. SHA has also held special one-off events like Pop-Up Sewing, where residents of the housing development and surrounding neighborhood can bring old clothes and repair them at a temporary sewing studio.



Figure 1: Residents and community members participate in Pop-Up Sewing events in the Yesler community.

In addition to building community ties, arts initiatives have also helped alleviate fears that the redevelopment and changes in the neighborhood might erase the community's sense of culture and history. As shown in this [video](#), arts projects such as placemaking sculptures have become a way to preserve the history and culture of the Yesler neighborhood. In this particular initiative, artists use a van as a mobile arts studio to work with residents in developing the artwork's concept and design.

In another project that celebrates the community's rich culture, SHA commissioned Thanh Tran, a resident of the target housing, to design artwork for the building lobby of the newly developed Hoa Mai Gardens. His work includes a large scale, eye-catching hanging scroll and a row of smaller original paintings. The art pieces feature scenes from nature and the Hoa Mai flower, a traditional Vietnamese yellow flower associated with Lunar New Year celebrations and also the building's namesake. Tran began painting in 2013 as therapy for ongoing health issues, but he quickly developed a distinct style of interpreting the natural world from memory and imagination. Painting has since become a source of joy and love for the artist, allowing for growth, experimentation, and the opportunity to express generosity to

those around him. His work can be viewed in the personal collections of many neighbors in the Yesler Terrace community.

When SHA first launched their arts programming, they recognized the challenge associated with launching a new program in any community. To help build momentum, SHA collaborated with different service providers, including community health workers and education specialists, to provide arts experiences as a part of their existing roster of programs. SHA also found that developing the trust of the residents was crucial to the programs' success. SHA staff now encourage the artists developing programs to consider themselves participants in the community and to attend community events, meetings, and holiday celebrations. Being present in the community has helped artists to forge their own personal relationships with residents and demonstrate their commitment to the community.



Figure 2: PHA resident Thanh Tran, born in Vietnam, was commissioned to develop artwork for the Hoa Mai Gardens Building Lobby.

While many of SHA's arts programs were supported by the Kresge foundation grant, SHA staff are committed to continuing this work beyond the grant. Grantees with limited funds can also use the arts to complement existing programming. For example, portraits are a powerful art form but relatively inexpensive to execute. Residents can pose in front of a plain or decorated backdrop at a community event and photos can be printed inexpensively and hung in a community space or lobby. For more ideas and tips to incorporate arts and culture into your community, see the National Endowment for the Arts free online book, [How to Do Creative Placemaking](#).

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